contact with Okinawa may have taken place in 743 A.D., but this may have been confined to the island of Kume, west of Naha, and not involved Okinawa itself.[6] 175 177 648

The modern Japanese contact with Okinawa which brought about the fall of the Tenson dynasty is associated with the arrival at Unten of Tametomo in the latter part of the twelfth century. Some have regarded this as historical, others as perhaps legendary.

Unten, on the Motobu peninsula, is one of the important places in the historical geography of Okinawa island. This is the Port Melville of the Western explorers, Hall and Perry, both of whom charted the bay and its harbor.

Tametomo, of the Minemoto clan, exiled after the final defeat of the Minemoto by the Taira clan in Japan, ultimately reached Unten and there married the daughter of one of the regional nobles, and after a period of civil war, the Tenson dynasty collapsed. In 1187 A. D., the son of Minemoto Tametomo by his Okinawan wife became King Shunten. Shunten, the first of three "Japanese kings," was followed by his son Shunma Junki (1238-1248), and his grandson Gihon (1249-1260). In 1260, the legitimate dynasty was restored under king Eiso.[7]

After his succession, Eiso toured the islands and is credited with setting regular boundaries to rice-fields. "It has been said that this greatly attracted the people so that they started to look after farming." Graves, according to a manuscript history, were first built in the island, at Urasoye, and the Buddhist temple, Gokurakuji was constructed with an officiating priest named Jenkan in charge of the temple.[8] 1764 [346]

The Japanese syllabary may have been introduced at this time. Buddhism apparently did not take hold. Chinese attacks on the islands in connection with the Mongol wars and the attempted invasion of Japan seem to have left no mark on the island. [210] [179]

The year 1372 is the beginning of the period of relationships with the Chinese, in this case, the Ming dynasty. This is contemporary with the growth of a vast trade network involving Korea, Japan, China, the Ryukyus, and Southeast Asia. It is not clear whether the trade voyages under King Satsudo (reigned 1350-1399) to South China, Malaya, and the Philippines were instrumental in stimulating the Ming dynasty to engage in the Pacific trade, or whether the forced alliance of the Ryukyus with the Chinese 175 648 439

[TEXT CONTINUES TOP OF P. 30 --Analyst]

6 CA Handbook, as cited, 41, and Chamberlain, as cited, 306.

7 Chamberlain, as cited, 308

8 Manuscript history in Leavenworth, The Loochoo islands, 80. On the Japanese syllabary, see Chamberlain, as cited, 308.

Japanese canned fish: mackerel, bonito, clams, whale meat hash 443
Noodles, buckwheat spaghetti and macaroni type pastes 262
Cookies, stored in glass jars, and sold singly
Sweet rolls (manju) from a town bakery, and sweetened bread (pan) 272
Tea
Aji no moto
White sugar
Soy bean oil

Soft Drinks and Candy 443

Bottled lemon and orange ades [272]
Cocoa Cola
Gum
Various candies sold by the piece, also stored in glass jars on the counter.

Notions

Needles and thread
Buttons of various sizes
Trimmings and ribbons [412]
Braids for making and trimming kimonos
hair pins, and combs

Clothing

Clogs (geta)
Undershirts [291]
Fibre sandals

Toilet Articles

Perfumes and toilet waters
Shampoos, liquid and powdered. [302]
Pomades and brilliantines [515]
Toothbrushes
Soaps
Toilet paper

Stationary

School tablets and notebooks [212]
Pencils
Comic books (in Japanese)

Medicines

Aspirin [278]
Stomach powders
Eye lotions

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

3

Naming the Child

On the day of his birth, the child is given a name, but this is not the one it carries throughout life. The latter name, sometimes called the school name, may be given 5 days after birth, counting the date of the birth. This custom of double naming is still used in Hanashiro and Hinatogawa, though, according to local residents, it disappeared from Matsuda ten years ago. It is hard to discover the reasons for this double naming. Perhaps the first name is a temporary one to be used for the first crucial days of the child's life. If he survives, he receives his permanent one. This name, while known to the child, is not ordinarily retained when he gets his second name. Among the very old, however, some of these first names have been retained through life.[4] In Hanashiro, young and old alike may be known by both names, but the younger are apt to use the full given name. Adults and the old are known by both names.

The names given on the birth day are often the occasion of laughter, as some have the same pronunciation as common names of household utensils, agricultural tools, or domestic animals. The following list was obtained in Hanashiro but the same names were equally familiar in the other villages. (1) Ushi, given to males and females. Ushi is also the word for cattle. (2) Kame, also the word for a turtle or a tortoise. (3) Tsuru, also a stork or crane. (4) Nta, given to both sexes, the Okinawan word for pig. (5) Handu, also a water barrel. (6) Kama, also a sickle. (7) Nabi, a pot.[5]

These are homonyms. The name is written in hiragana or katakana (the Japanese syllabaries), not with the Chinese character of its homonym. Hence it would be incorrect to say that the child is named "Cow," "Pig," "Pot," etc.

In Matsuda, up to about 30 years ago, according to one informant, if a wife gave birth to a child in the husband's absence, the eldest relative present gave the child a name of the sex opposite its own, apparently to avoid bad luck by resort to contrariety. When mothers gave birth to a child in the toilet, it was named nta or nte, apparently referring to the identity of the toilet and the pig pen.

4 This is apparent in analyzing the family registers (koseki)

5 Other names are Tamachi (female); Umete (female in Hanashiro); Makatu (f); Chiru (f); Taru (male and female); Jira (m); Sanru (m and f but scarce); Miyo (m); Utu (f); Kanashi (f), and Kana (m and f).

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

grandparents. The food was then served: noodles cooked with vegetables, with a slight fish flavor; rolls; tempura, a sort of fritter; a fish cake known as kamobuko with a red border symbolizing happiness, and plenty of sake (awamori). A streamer hung from the ceiling near the alcove, announcing the name and date of birth of the new born child, together with the written wish that she might live any number of 10,000 year periods. There are no special ceremonies on these occasions. Some guests drop in for a few minutes, others remain for the whole evening. The women and the children go home early, while the men continue talking and drinking. This celebration is the first of a series that continues through a person's life, and if his descendants are devoted, will end 33 years after his death. After this celebration, things settle down until the child's first birthday.

852 [262] [212]

At present a child's age is reckoned in the same way as the Western custom. A child is one year old one year after the date of his birth. This is a recent innovation in force since January 1, 1950. Formerly age was reckoned in the Chinese and Japanese manner. A child born during a year was one year old and on the following New Year became two years of age. Thus a child born on December 27 would be two on January 1. The difference between the Chinese-Japanese and the western reckoning is that the former counts the years during which a person lives with New Years as the date for increasing the age, the latter counts the number of one year periods in which a person has lived.

805 [1M]

The old system of reckoning age is inconvenient and conceals age differences. A one day difference might mean a year's difference in age in the case of a child born on December 31, and another on January 1. Determining the actual age of a person was troublesome. When children started to school, they might be 6, 7, or 8 years old and still be about the same actual age.

4

The Early Years

In all the villages studied, the women returned to their normal tasks about a month after childbirth. When the mother returns to the fields, the grandmother may accompany mother and child to the fields, the grandmother watching the child, while the mother nurses it at 10, 1, and 4. If the grandmother is too old and disabled, the child might stay home with the grandmother and the mother return from the fields to feed the child. Lacking help of this kind, the mother remains at home until the other children have returned from school.

846 854 853 603

But arrangements of this sort need not last long, for very early in life the child is strapped on the back and carried around

854

1:Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

mother, for example, fed her child rice gruel (okayu) at eight months and at the age of one year the child began eating sweet potatoes. By the time the child is ready to walk and play, he often carries with him a piece of sweet potato, and, in season, a piece of sugar cane. 853 262

A party is held on the first birthday anniversary of the child. This is more elaborate than the one which honored his birth. Birthdays are not celebrated each year. After the first anniversary, the next are on the 13th, 25th, 37th, 49th, and 61st birthdays, that is, at twelve year intervals. 852 527

The party for the first birthday of a child is particularly tender and affectionate. At one year, he can walk or stumble, and answer or smile to the calls of his parents and grandparents. [856] He can pick up things, throw them, and make his presence felt. The exhibition of these skills becomes part of the celebration. It is customary to invite both relatives and friends, who bring a small money present, from Y20 which is usual to Y100 which is uncommon. 527

During the party, the child is given several symbolic gifts. 852 These are placed on a low table in the middle of the room which 431 the child can easily walk to and reach. Usually the gifts are a book, a fountain pen (or a writing brush, fude), an abacus (soroban), [212] and a stack of paper money. These symbolize the wish that the child [802] will become proficient in learning, writing, counting and mathematics, and will become rich. The child is eagerly watched as he unsteadily [554] toddles to the table to see which article he picks up first. While the act is not taken seriously, the article which the child picks up first is supposed to indicate the field of endeavor in which he will be most fortunate.

These parties, small or large, include men, women, and children, 852 but the majority of the guests usually are men. After the child 527 has gone to bed, the party continues. In more formal and larger parties, the guests first come up to the father, go on their knees, [576] bow, and make a short speech of congratulation. Sometimes these [537] speeches sound as if they are prepared beforehand, other times as if they are spoken spontaneously. There is an exchange of sake between the father and his guest, both sipping from the same cup, the usual custom. The mother and the female relatives during this time are in the kitchen preparing the food.

Women sit by themselves. This is true of all celebrations when [562] the sexes are together. Women do not drink. (In a similar party near Matsuda, the old women--usually over 60--drank a little). The jolly [535] old women also love to dance solos in the traditional style. They [387] dance with grace and vigor. The evening progresses without any planned entertainment. There is talking and drinking, singing, and [533] samisen playing. Men, with a repertoire of Okinawan songs, sing in

543 these matters. In township exhibits of arts and crafts, there are evidences of these skills, such as the training of a chrysanthemum, a favorite choice, but these are not part of daily life.

532 Yet there is evidence of artistic talent and interest which teachers and parents encourage in the young. Okinawan children draw [353] and copy well. It is not unusual to see an otherwise bare room of a poor farmer's home decorated with the paintings or drawings of a son or daughter. While clearly the work of novices, they often show feeling for line and color. School buildings, houses, and landscapes are the favorite subjects. Drawing skills come as no surprise because of the close relationship, in countries using the Chinese character, 875 of calligraphy and art. Teachers of drawing and art in the schools 212 are skillful in rapid sketching, and part of this skill must be the result of early training in the sequence of strokes and in writing the Chinese character with confidence and boldness.

535 Dancing and samisen playing are learned by imitation and self-533 instruction. Music is learned by ear, the dancing by observing the old 868 and skilled. Parents do not instruct their children in these arts; they pick up the skill themselves. There are no village teachers nor do the schools teach native dances, songs, or samisen playing. (In recent years instruction books have been furnished when a samisen is [562] purchased). Samisen playing is a monopoly of the men, many of whom also have a repertoire of traditional dances. These performers are always in demand on social occasions. Both old and young men dance, but only the old women feel free to do so. Seeing a seventy or eighty year old grandmother dancing at a party is commonplace, but I have never seen a young girl or a young woman in her thirties doing this. (Young girls and young women may participate in formal dances in processions and on holidays). Among the younger people, there is considerable interest, but little facility in American dancing.

532 Hanging scrolls (kakemono) are often purchased by the villagers. But these are dashed off affairs, following Japanese art conventions, such as the jolly Japanese patron saint, tigers, the bamboo-plum blossom-cherry triad, and the turtle and the cormorant, etc.

181 One has the impression of latent talent in music, dancing, and drawing but that the cultural conditions have not been favorable to [533] their development. Social events and parties are unthinkable without [535] singing, dancing, and samisen playing. Good drawing and calligraphy [532] are admired. But none of these seem to be highly developed folk arts. [868] Possibly one reason is that the transmission of the skills has been purely imitative, and that a body of knowledge has not accumulated in books, organized teaching, or through apprenticeship and hereditary occupations by which ideas can be improved upon by wider dissemination. [369] The cultural isolation of rural villages may have prevented the building up of a tradition in art and handicraft. Naha and Shuri, the historical cultural centers, have produced the fine examples of lacquer ware, [636] ceramics, and paintings. Possibly also Japanese repression of the native culture has been the main reason. Whatever they are, the lack of advance-

565 A common device among noble families was to vary the second
553 character of the Chinese compound which made up the given name. This custom still remains, but has no significance beyond individual family pride. The following case illustrates this naming device:

Relation to Present Head of House	Given Name
Grandfather	Chohyo
Father	Chokan
Present Head	Choyo
First Son	Choko
Second Son	Choshin
Third Son	Chokeii
Fourth Son	Chosei

554 Before the war, the village hierarchy consisted of the headman and retired elders and officials, the school principal and teachers if resident there, the well-to-do farmer, followed by the ordinary farmers or fishermen.[3] These distinctions are now blurred and have been affected by other changes. The school principal and the school teacher retain their prestige, but they have lost their relatively high economic status. Their clothing and the appearance of their homes are indistinguishable from those of a farmer. The ordinary farmer who works his field during the day and whose wife raises the pigs is in a better economic position. The same applies to village and township officials. Many distinctions based on wealth have disappeared because of the destruction and general
[556] impoverishment of the war. Neither are distinctions possible in dress, for everyone wears makeshift clothing. Post-war circumstances have put the old at a disadvantage in dealing with new situations. Present day village life is fluid. The war and its aftermath have blurred many of the former distinctions based on age, occupation, or wealth.

621 Village leadership is based on individual qualities, but is limited
208 by group opinion which all individuals respect. Decisions of any character, personal, familial, or political, emerge from consultation and discussion. One constantly hears the word sōdan, meaning a discussion or a consultation, with reference to decision making.

555 What types of individuals assume leadership in village affairs?
212 First, leadership comes from a group that is literate. This limits the people available for responsible positions. Occupations such as the

3 According to old residents in Matsuda, there were in their youth, classes whose occupation made them inferior. Examples were bell ringers
[461] ringers at funerals and pig killers. Pig killing is still considered
[565] a low occupation, but this has no relevance to village life, for no
[963] commercial slaughtering is done in the villages. In the villages, there is no suggestion of the existence of groups looked down upon because of their occupation, with the possible exception of a collector of night soil—and this occupation is infrequent.

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

conduct of a local business of any size, employment in official and semi-official organizations, and teaching require facility in reading and writing Japanese, that is, the use of the Chinese character and the two Japanese syllabaries, katakana and hiragana. It is true that under the Japanese and the present system of education, everyone learns the characters. But after school is left behind, there must be continued practice in reading and writing, or one's fund of knowledge gradually disappears and he remembers only a few of the simpler or more common characters. For responsible leadership, this school vocabulary must at least be maintained. A village headman today must hold his own in reading and writing. Reports have to be made to the township office. The frequent conferences and meetings require note taking. Storm warnings may be received, correspondence and simple record keeping are continual tasks. In one village, the criticism made of the headman was that his knowledge of characters was too elementary.

If a person has leisure, this makes him available for positions of leadership. A poor farmer could not ordinarily accept the position of village headman except at a great sacrifice. Public duties, even in a small village like Hanashiro, require that a headman be on call most of the time for meetings, or to hear personal problems and complaints of the villagers. It is significant that the former village headman of Hanashiro and the current headman of Matsuda both are operators of rice mills and do not have the exacting dawn to dusk duties of a farmer. In Hanashiro and Nagamo, the present headmen are operating farmers who are able to combine their private and public duties, but both places are small. The headman of Hinatogawa, a fisherman, has had to forego many fishing trips because his duties kept him in the village.

Leadership is also assumed by those who have had foreign experience, either in the Japanese administrative hierarchy abroad or simply through foreign residence. These people generally have a broader point of view and know more.

The last factor is age. It is often thought that village life in Oriental countries under the family system is dominated by the older and respected males. It is true that the opinion of retired elders is sought for and respected, but not merely because of age. In addition, there may be a life of successful farming, teaching, office holding, possibly a combination of these, behind them. Leadership comes from young men too, usually the result of experience in the young men's association. Energetic leadership, often accompanied by organisational ability, is noticeable in the age group from about 24 to 27. Women have fewer opportunities but can show their abilities in their work in the Women's Association.

Village leadership rests both on the respected elders and the promising young men, on those who have kept and increased their skill in language, who have occupations that relieve them from the unremitting

789 824 rope was hung across the entrance of the family compound two times a year, on the 9th day of the 8th month, and on the 8th day of the 12th month. Along the rope, there were knotted blades of grass, also the san plant. The purpose is to frighten away evil spirits and evil doers. 283 One peculiarity of this twisted rice rope is that it is made in a different manner from the ordinary rope. The usual rope is a twist made by rolling the fibre between the palms to the right or away from the body. In this special rope, the roll is reversed and is to the left or toward the body. It is difficult for a person already skilled in the regular method. This villager told of going to two noro [793] priestesses in the village of Yabu who specialized in teaching this method of making ropes. The husband and the wife received instruction, paying about ¥40 for it because the wife believed in the efficacy of the practice. Each year at the proper times, the husband now makes the special rope himself.

787 791 184 Some fortune telling practices shade into religious beliefs, just as religious customs have also included soothsaying and divination. The noros and the Buddhist priests formerly practiced some fortune telling. There were no fortune tellers in any of the villages studied, but villagers occasionally consult them. Here, too, the patronage comes largely from the old and from the women. Younger people, if they know about them, regard these practices as superstitions unworthy of belief. The word meishin (superstition) is frequently heard among the young in describing customs and beliefs of the old. 791 [212] The sign of the fortune teller (sanjinsō) is the Chinese character for three written three times. These characters are said to signify the three states of existence, pre-natal, the present, and the afterlife, on all of which the fortune teller is well versed. Those in Hanashiro and Hinatogawa who wish to consult a fortune teller go to Itoman; those in Hatsuda go to Nago. The cost is usually from ¥40-50 a visit. Typical reasons for a consultation with a fortune teller are: (1) to find out if an ill person will become well, (2) among the fishermen, to find out if the fisherman will return when an unexpected storm has arisen, (3) to discover if a present unhappiness has been caused by the evil deed of an ancestor and if this can be corrected, and (4) to find out the lucky days for such undertakings as marriages, building a house, or beginning new phases of construction.

782 774 Old women may utter a prayer on seeing a child fall, fearing that the child's spirit might escape because of surprise or fright. (This was observed in Hinatogawa).

778 In Hatsuda, there were shelves for burning charcoal sticks in some of the numerous caves in the area. The nature of the worship could not be ascertained, but they may be offerings to deities of the cave.

514 1776 782 778 Worship and prayers in the toilet seem to have completely disappeared. There were no personified toilet gods. The toilet apparently was the place in which thanks were given that a place for excrement had been provided. In all the villages, it was said to be an old belief which has now died out. There was no shelf or special place of worship in the toilet.

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

left for later practice. When all the new words are presented in this fashion, the teacher takes the textbook and reads the passage once more to the class. This is a signal for all to pay close attention to their books. After this, everyone reads to himself. For about five minutes bedlam reigns as discordant voices fill the room. Then a child is called by the teacher to read aloud to the class. The teacher may call on several other students before instructing all to read to themselves once more, for the last time. Should a child make a mistake in reading, the teacher rereads the passage. The lesson is concluded with instructions to study it that night. In the evening, back in the village, one is apt to hear loud, sing-song recitations of the lesson being read and reread. Elementary school students delight in verbal presentations of whole lessons on the spur of the moment during playtime. Talent programs are popular among 8-year-old girls, and at village or school celebrations in which students participate it would be unusual not to have at least two readings offered. The school also promotes oratorical contests in which long, memorized stories are recited. Rote memory, discussion with association of facts, familiar with the unfamiliar, and imitation, therefore, are utilized in these learning situations.

Although reading allows for a certain amount of creativity in timing and flexibility of inflection patterns, penmanship is a rigidly controlled practice. As the teacher writes the character on the board, strictest attention is required. There is precise order in the sequence of strokes, as well as unquestionable direction as to how to form them. The teacher counts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, while writing the strokes on the board. All children have to raise their right hand and with the index finger write the character in the air, following the teacher's example. The character is written in this fashion four or five times before the whole class is sent to the blackboard in small groups to demonstrate that they have understood the principles of writing the character. This process uses imitation, repetition, and memorization in learning.

In the area of physical science and social studies, teachers are working toward practical applications of concepts which were presented in the lessons. Resources are very limited and so is the potential of actual experiences which a northern Okinawan village child is likely to have during childhood. Applying concepts mostly remains in the realm of discussion in class and not as much has been done to widen the circle as educators wish. Excursions to the beach and mountains help somewhat to integrate and bring into association those facts, mentioned in textbooks, which have reference to the local environ-

212 Writing Okinawa never developed an independent system of writing; in the old
197 kingdom both Japanese and Chinese were used. Literacy was largely
829 confined to the upper classes, and it is said that students were sent to both
[571] countries for study. Apparently the literati held the Chinese language and culture in high regard while disdaining that of the Japanese; yet, Bettelheim noted in 1851 that Japanese books were very popular in spite of this contempt of the literati.[1] He also stated that the Okinawans always preferred biblical texts written in Japanese to those in Chinese. In view of the political paramouncy of Japan from 1609 and the close linguistic and cultural ties between the two peoples this popularity of Japanese is not surprising. It also should
[538] be noted that although the literati are reported as preferring Chinese to Japanese, the major literary achievements of Okinawa were written in Japanese. Thus, for example, the Omorosōshi, sixteenth century collection of songs which the late Dr Ifa has called the Ryukyuan scriptures, was recorded in a Japanese style of writing; the same is true for the annals of the old kingdom and for the first dictionary of the Okinawan language.

212 With the advent of a Japanese administration and educational system,
197 the study of Chinese ceased, and today Japanese is used exclusively. Most Okinawan place names and family names as they are written in Japanese can be given two interpretations, the Japanese and the Okinawan; in a majority of cases the Japanese is given preference. Occasionally when Okinawan speech is transcribed as in the case of lyrics accompanying phonograph records, the Japanese syllabary is used. This is not a suitable devise for transcribing Okinawan speech, which
[114] contains many sounds unfamiliar to Japanese. Unfortunately much of the early linguistic research conducted in this area was rendered virtually worthless by the employment of this syllabary. In recent years scholars like Miyanaga and Kinjo have recorded Ryukyuan using the International Phonetic Alphabet.

197 Conclusion At the present time Okinawan speech enjoys widespread use through-
191 out the whole of the island. It is still the language of the home,
177 and as such it is a more common medium of expression than the official language,
178 Japanese. The latter, backed by the government, schools, and all the forces of modern life, is gradually supplanting Okinawan, but it would be an over-statement to say that the language is dying out. It may be expected that the majority of Okinawans will remain bilingual as they are today until such time when a whole adult generation will speak only Japanese and transmit only Japanese to its offspring.

[1] Bettelheim, n.d., p. 31.

4. Present Problems

871 If one asks the question, "Is the present education system giving Okinawa what it needs?", even a casual glance suggests a negative answer. It should be obvious from some of the material of this report that the ordinary Okinawan is disastrously ignorant of many things that concern him---in economics, politics, and particularly in matters of health and sanitation. Yet this ignorance does not seem to be confined to the less educated. It was a college student who gave some of the folk beliefs about disease. Another young man indicated that the schools themselves by attempted rationalization may be perpetuating an uncritical attitude; his high school teacher had explained that crows do not really know when someone is going to die because they possess supernatural power; they know it because they can smell death.

000 The difficulty lies partly in the unwillingness of most Okinawans, one might say most human beings, to re-examine cherished beliefs. Ignorance of the true nature of disease, as discussed in Chapter IX, is not merely due to the absence of knowledge, but rather to the presence of a set of traditional beliefs that form a body of "knowledge", incorrect though it may be, that provides the individual with the explanations he needs. In order to teach modern scientific explanations, educators must determine what the body of folk belief consists of, re-evaluate it, and devise methods whereby its falsity can be demonstrated. Doing this would not be easy; it would be doubly hard because of the greater importance given to the opinions of older people in Okinawan society.

871 554 Ignorance may also be due to lack of interest. Education is a source of prestige to the educated individual. But education as defined by Okinawan culture perhaps does not include such subjects as botany and entomology. At any rate certain fields of study, English literature for example, seem to have enormous attraction, while others, applied sciences such as agriculture, have little. Moreover, other observers have reported that among those Okinawans who are engaged in work in applied sciences there seems to be a distaste for field work and a preference for office work. This too may reflect a higher value placed on sedentary "paper work" and a lower one on work with the hands.

876 177 As Lebra has pointed out in Chapter II, most Okinawans suffer from a linguistic handicap. Most children learn Okinawan in the home and then have to learn a second language, Japanese, in the school. This immediately gives them less time for learning other things. But their troubles do not end with the acquisition of a speaking knowledge of Japanese. This is not so very difficult since the two languages are closely related. But the Japanese system [212] of writing, with its two native syllabaries plus the Chinese characters, is incredibly complicated and requires an enormous expenditure of time and effort. A student learning the geography of Okinawa, for example, must spend a great part of his time learning the characters for Okinawan place names and thus, as in one instance observed, he may not get around to learning where all of them are.

The opinion of a former teacher is worth noting. When I worked with him in 1945 he told me that he and other teachers who privately believed that

Japanese nationalism had been perverting education had felt that their only means of creating more open minds was to teach as many characters as possible so that the students might later read a wider range of material. In 1954 he said that he was now convinced that the Japanese, and the Okinawans, would be better off if SCAP had forced them to discard characters and adopt a system of romanization. This man is now a printer and publisher; the characters are his own stock-in-trade.

The difficulties facing any sort of language reform in Japan are great. If romanized Japanese only were taught in Japanese schools, the whole of Japanese literature would soon have to be republished in romanized form and most modern scientific works would have to be not only republished but rewritten as well. The great number of homophones in the technical vocabulary of Japanese are distinguishable to the eye because of the different characters with which they are written, but they are not distinguishable to the ear nor would they be distinguishable written in romanized form. Romanization would require the introduction of many new terms. Moreover, because of the esthetic appeal of the characters and the high prestige derived from a knowledge of them, many educated Japanese would have a strong emotional resistance to discarding them. During the occupation certain reforms were instituted but in some respects they only increased the complexity of the system by introducing for some characters simplified forms which now must be learned in addition to the older, more complex forms. It is quite likely that any attempt to reform the Japanese system of writing on Okinawa would meet with even greater resistance than it would meet with in Japan.

In addition to the difficulties of the writing system, the literary forms of Japanese present some differences in style which make them difficult for the less educated to read. I was once present in an Okinawan home when a child in the second grade brought home a mimeographed request from the school for a certain fee. I looked at the notice and found that I could not be sure of the readings of all of the characters or of the meaning of the construction of the first paragraph, although I can read technical material in my own field. I asked the mother, who had had six years of schooling, to read it to me. She admitted that she could not read it either, except for the place where it said how much and what for. Later I showed it to a University student, who, after some stumbling, read the first paragraph and put it into colloquial Japanese. It was of course merely a formal salutation. It did not contribute to the meaning of the notice and it did not matter that the average parent could not read it. Yet if it had been omitted, the few educated parents---perhaps those from whom larger contributions were expected---might have shaken their heads and asked what education is coming to that teachers are no longer capable of writing proper Japanese.

As if there were not enough linguistic problems, recently the English language has been introduced into the Primary School curriculum beginning at the Fifth Grade. It appears to be taught in most cases by persons who do not themselves speak English or even read it with any fluency. Moreover, it appears to be taught by the 'katakana' method; that is, the texts or the teachers attempt to teach the pronunciation of English words by spelling them out in the Japanese syllabary. The Japanese syllabary is admirably well-adapted to the representation of Japanese sounds, but woefully deficient for

the representation of the sounds of any other language. Its open syllables and lack of distinction between "l" and "r", "si" and "shi", etc., result in such horrors as "ri-to-ru" for "little" and "shi-ku-su" for "six". And these are the pronunciations learned by the unsuspecting children, pronunciations that are unintelligible to a native speaker of English and which must be later unlearned if the student is to acquire a usable knowledge of English.

But even though the teaching of English in this manner is pretty clearly a waste of time, there is great resistance to abandoning it. A USCAR official who has visited many schools told us that he had frequently had the painful experience of having to meet the English teacher. This usually meant pretending to communicate in order to save the face of the man and the school. Yet even school officials who realize how poor the instruction is are are unwilling to discontinue it. The prestige of English is too great and too many persons are depending upon it. Perhaps again we have the Okinawan theme--- One must not interfere with the livelihood of another.

No doubt there is a need for instruction in English to students on the high school and college level, but like any language English can be taught most effectively and with the least waste of effort by persons who have had the linguistic training. Americans who have had no special training in this field are also likely to be less effective teachers.

It has been suggested several times that the Okinawan language, or one of the several varieties of it, might be reduced to an alphabetical system of writing and that this might make possible the development of an Okinawan literature. The suggestion has evidently not met with much enthusiasm. Two obstacles stand in the way of such an endeavor. First, the creation of a good phonemic transcription for Okinawan would require considerable work by a trained linguist. Second, to produce a literature requires incentive in persons of talent. At the present time the high prestige of Japanese and English and the low value placed on Okinawan provide little basis for such incentive. If such an endeavor were successful, however, it could well provide Okinawa with a greater cultural self-sufficiency than it has known for several generations. But the question might also be asked, is the creation of greater linguistic fragmentation and of national feelings in small groups desirable in a world that is growing smaller by the day?

I have discussed linguistic factors in education in some detail not only because they present problems in themselves but also because they illustrate the operation of a factor that may create even greater problems, the factor of values existing among educators and those receiving education alike. The high value placed on literary Japanese and now on English are merely two elements of a value system that often is not in accord with the urgent needs of Okinawan society. Of more immediate concern to education, of course, are the continuation of the program of rebuilding Okinawa's schools and the provision of more incentive for persons to enter and stay in the teaching profession. But ultimately the problem of values is likely to become a crucial one, if Okinawa is to have a healthier and more democratic society. The task facing the educators of Okinawa's youth and the educators of the educators is a difficult one: it requires a fine balance between authority and freedom.